

**5. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

**Policy Regarding Response to Official Citizen Complaints**

A written complaint form shall be made available to any citizen who wishes to file a complaint about County government. (Copies available on County website and Board of Supervisors office.)

A prompt and courteous response will be provided to citizens who submit a written complaint concerning County staff, County policy or a situation or condition over which the County has responsibility or authority. This policy applies whenever a citizen submits such a written and signed complaint to a County department or to the Board of Supervisors. This policy shall not be applicable to anonymous complaints.

After a written complaint is made to a County department head or to the Board of Supervisors, contact (in writing, by telephone, e-mail or in person) shall be made with the citizen who filed the complaint within 5 working days from the date the complaint was received. If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, contact must still be made to let the citizen know that the complaint has been received and is under review. The citizen shall also be advised of the estimated date the review will be completed and when a formal written response will be provided.

All complaints shall be thoroughly investigated.

If a complaint about a County department is filed with the Board of Supervisors instead of with the department head, the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors will contact the individual who filed the complaint to acknowledge its receipt and shall determine whether or not to provide a copy of the actual complaint to the department head, depending upon the nature/confidentiality of the complaint. In most of these cases, it is anticipated that the department head will be provided with a copy of the complaint and will conduct an investigation of the complaint and provide a response to the Board of Supervisors and to the citizen who filed the complaint. The Board of Supervisors Chairman may determine that an independent investigation of the complaint, outside of the department, is needed and in such case shall conduct such investigation with assistance from the County Administrative Officer, County Counsel or other County officials, as he deems appropriate.

This policy does not supersede State laws relative to mandatory procedures for filing and investigation of complaints regarding County peace officers, Air Quality Management District complaints or any other programs subject to State mandated complaint procedures.

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Adopted by Board of Supervisors 2/15/05

## PROPOSED DRAFT WITH TRACK CHANGES

### 5. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

#### Policy Regarding Response to Official ~~Constituent~~Citizen Complaints

A written complaint form shall be made available to any ~~constituent~~ who wishes to file a complaint about County government. (Copies available on County website and Board of Supervisors office.)

A prompt and courteous response will be provided to ~~citizen~~constituents who submit a written complaint concerning County staff, County policy or a situation or condition over which the County has responsibility or authority. This policy applies whenever a ~~citizen~~constituent submits such a written and signed complaint to a County department or to the Board of Supervisors. This policy shall not be applicable to anonymous complaints.

After a written complaint is made to a County department head, to the County Administrative Officer (CAO), or to the Board of Supervisors, contact (in writing, by telephone, e-mail or in person) shall be made with the ~~citizen~~constituent who filed the complaint within 5 working days from the date the complaint was received. If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, contact must still be made to let the ~~citizen~~constituent know that the complaint has been received and is under review. The ~~citizen~~constituent shall also be advised of the estimated date the review will be completed and when a formal written response will be provided.

All complaints shall be thoroughly investigated.

1. If a complaint about a County department is filed with the CAO or the Board of Supervisors instead of with the department head, the CAO shall notify the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and shall log the complaint and shall will contact the ~~constituent~~individual who filed it the complaint to acknowledge its receipt.
2. The CAO~~and~~ shall determine whether or not to provide a copy of the actual complaint to the department head, depending upon the nature/confidentiality of the complaint. In most of these cases, it is anticipated that the department head will be provided with a copy of the complaint and given a date by which a response is due.
3. The department head~~and~~ will then conduct an investigation of the complaint and provide a timely response to the CAO~~Board of Supervisors~~ and to the ~~citizen~~constituent who filed the complaint.
4. The CAO~~Board of Supervisors Chairman~~ may determine that an independent investigation of the complaint, outside of the department, is needed and in such case shall notify the Chair of the Board of Supervisors and conduct such investigation with assistance from the County Administrative Officer, County Counsel or other County officials, as he deem~~eds~~ appropriate. In such case, it is anticipated that additional time,

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beyond the customary response time of 5 working days will be needed to complete the investigation. The CAO will notify the constituent who filed the complaint that additional time is needed and the matter is still under investigation and a response will be provided as soon as possible.

In the event the CAO is the subject of the complaint, the County Counsel will perform Steps 1,2 and 4 outlined above.

Complaints and responses thereto will be reviewed with appointed department heads during their evaluations with the Board of Supervisors. For elected department heads, complaints and responses will be periodically reviewed by an ad hoc committee of the Board of Supervisors and any action needed will be agendized for at a public Board of Supervisors meeting.

This policy does not supercede State laws relative to mandatory procedures for filing and investigation of complaints regarding County peace officers, Air Quality Management District complaints or any other programs subject to State mandated complaint procedures.

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Adopted by Board of Supervisors [XX2/XX15/XX05](#)

## **5. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

### **Policy Regarding Response to Official Constituent Complaints**

A written complaint form shall be made available to any constituent who wishes to file a complaint about County government. (Copies available on County website and Board of Supervisors office.)

A prompt and courteous response will be provided to constituents who submit a written complaint concerning County staff, County policy or a situation or condition over which the County has responsibility or authority. This policy applies whenever a constituent submits such a written and signed complaint to a County department or to the Board of Supervisors. This policy shall not be applicable to anonymous complaints.

After a written complaint is made to a County department head, to the County Administrative Officer (CAO), or to the Board of Supervisors, contact (in writing, by telephone, e-mail or in person) shall be made with the constituent who filed the complaint within 5 working days from the date the complaint was received. If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, contact must still be made to let the constituent know that the complaint has been received and is under review. The constituent shall also be advised of the estimated date the review will be completed and when a formal written response will be provided.

All complaints shall be thoroughly investigated.

1. If a complaint about a County department is filed with the CAO or the Board of Supervisors instead of with the department head, the CAO shall notify the Chair of the Board of Supervisors and shall log the complaint and contact the constituent who filed the to acknowledge receipt.
2. The CAO shall determine whether or not to provide a copy of the actual complaint to the department head, depending upon the nature/confidentiality of the complaint. In most of these cases, it is anticipated that the department head will be provided with a copy of the complaint and given a date by which a response is due.
3. The department head will then conduct an investigation of the complaint and provide a timely response to the CAO and to the constituent who filed the complaint.
4. The CAO may determine that an independent investigation of the complaint, outside of the department, is needed and in such case shall notify the Chair of the Board of Supervisors and conduct such investigation with assistance from the County Counsel or other County officials, as deemed appropriate. In such case, it is anticipated that additional time, beyond the customary response time of 5 working days will be needed to complete the investigation. The CAO will notify the constituent who filed the

complaint that additional time is needed and the matter is still under investigation and a response will be provided as soon as possible.

In the event the CAO is the subject of the complaint, the County Counsel will perform Steps 1,2 and 4 outlined above.

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Adopted by Board of Supervisors XX/XX/XX